



Between 1989-1992, BH&M were responsible for one of the first City Technology Colleges, Thomas Telford School. When the programme for City Academies started, the Thomas Telford School, using the vehicle of their online curriculum company, Thomas Telford Online, backed by the original sponsors, **The Mercers' Livery Company**, sought to sponsor one of the first City Academies.

Following a limited competition BH&M were delighted to follow on their success at Telford with the design and procurement of the Walsall City Academy. Completed in exactly two years from the date of appointment, this new school for 1100 pupils is situated in Bilston just north of Walsall and replaces a former failing school with modern facilities which are illustrated here. Retaining the original sports hall, which has now been refurbished, the rest of the school is entirely new and revisits some of the pioneering educational ideas of learning centres developed by the Practice with Professor Alan Brymer and Sir Kevin Satchwell at Thomas Telford.

The building contains all the necessary education facilities, as well as teaching spaces, dining hall and a performance space for an audience of 350.

Above: Entrance  
Left: Dining

Walsall City Academy

Below: Drama  
Middle: Laboratory  
Right: Classroom corridor  
Bottom: Learning resources

## Walsall City Academy





The restrained area allowances for Academies mean that the performance space has to fulfil a variety of activities ranging from an additional gymnastics space for dance, an area for examinations and of course music and theatrical performance. BH&M have been involved in a number of these multi-use spaces. The one at Walsall has provided all these functions for the Academy. Seating nearly 400 (and more if the entire performance area is not needed) the system of electronically controlled seating rolls out to provide a full proscenium arch style theatre.

There is a fully equipped control room to the rear of the **auditorium** linked into the **School's** extensive information technology system with projection and repeater screens spaced down the auditorium for lectures. The floor opens to provide an orchestra pit in which seating is also housed to provide the effect of a proper proscenium arch raised stage.

Behind the space there is a black box drama and dance room along with changing and green room space.

Above: Entrance Auditorium  
Below: Music classroom

Walsall City Academy



Top: Entrance  
Top right: Art  
Above: Administration